

A Boom in Women-Owned Firms

More and more women are starting their own businesses.

Statistics compiled by the U.S. Small Business Administration show that women-owned small firms are increasing three times as fast as the number of male-owned companies. Other government statistics show that one in every four sole proprietorships in the country today is headed by a woman and that receipts of women-owned businesses have increased 112 percent in recent years.

SBA officials cite three factors as contributing to the sharp increase in women-owned firms:

--Because more and more women are entering the nation's work force, women are acquiring skills and experience that can be translated into entrepreneurship.

--Because of business and academic education, women are positioning themselves for business opportunities in expanding fields, such as aerospace, telecommunications, electronics and biomedical engineering.

--Because of the nation's overall growth, more opportunities are available for new business startups, especially in service industries. Almost half of women-owned small firms are in the service sector.

President Reagan's Annual Report on the State of Small Business, prepared by SBA's Office of Advocacy, shows that women-owned businesses have

been increasing at an annual rate of 10 percent or more in seven major types of businesses. The chart below tells this story:

Female-Operated Businesses with Annual Growth Rates of 10 Percent or More, 1977-1982

Type of Business	Annual Rate of Growth (Percent)
Business Services	
Management and Public Relations	22.3
Services to Buildings	18.3
Medical and Health Services	
Miscellaneous Medical and Health Services	12.0
Nursing and Personal Care Facilities	17.9
Professional Services	
Legal Services	27.1
Accounting, Auditing, and Bookkeeping	15.5
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	
Security Brokers and Dealers	78.3
Commodity Contract Brokers and Exchange Services	21.9
Insurance Agents, Brokers and Services	21.0
Manufacturing	
Apparel and Other Textile Production	23.9
Construction	
General Building Contractors	39.3
Agriculture Services	
Animal Services Except Livestock	13.6